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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/17/07

SPONSOR Grubestic LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Eliminate County Surveyor Position SB 889

ANALYST Ortiz

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)

Attorney General's Office (AGO)

Secretary of State (SoS)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 889 would amend and repeal several provisions of state law to eliminate the elected office of county surveyor.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

According to DFA, Santa Fe County, apparently the last county to retain an elected surveyor will save \$22,358 in their budget expenditures each fiscal year by enacting SB-889.

DFA further explains that county governments will utilize private sector surveyors through the public bid process when county survey projects are needed. County governments will administer the resulting contracts from the winning bid of participating private sector surveyors.

LFC staff note money will not necessarily be saved because the counties still have to pay private surveyors.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The AGO reports that the position of an elected county surveyor is created in NMSA Section 4-42-1. The county surveyor conducts surveys where necessary and keeps survey records. See NMSA Sections 4-42-2 to 4-42-15. This bill would authorize boards of county commissioners to use the services of licensed surveyors while repealing that elected position.

According to DFA, in 1912, licensed surveyors were needed for objective determination of boundaries between government jurisdictions. Since that time, the elected office has become insecure in nature as the private sector can more effectively bid on county survey projects when needed. In private boundary disputes a surveyor from the private sector would be used rather than a public sector elected official. The result is extra costs to counties to continue to maintain an antiquated elected position in effect when cost savings to county budgets could be the result if the position were eliminated. Apparently, only Santa Fe County retains the elected county surveyor position. There is no surveyor's affiliate of the New Mexico Association of Counties.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The Office of the Secretary of State indicates that issues with SB 889 do not apply to Secretary of State.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

DFA suggests that the consequences of not enacting SB-889 will be to continue the practice of paying an elected position for which little or no work is produced due to the position apparently being antiquated.

EO/nt